

# SOUTHERN SECTIONALISM.

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## SPEECH

OF

HON. JOHN HICKMAN, OF PENN.

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Delivered in the U. S. House of Representatives, May 1, 1860.

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Mr. HICKMAN said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will answer to God and my country much that has been said on the Administration side of this House. I speak of sectionalism—a subject frequently named here and throughout the country, but never examined or discussed, and, consequently, but imperfectly comprehended. The word has long served the demagogue for clap-trap, and has furnished the alarmist with all his stock in trade. More, doubtless, is to be heard of it in the future; and as we of the Democratic party, who are unwilling to baptize the folly and corruption of the present Administration into wisdom and propriety, are charged with fostering and encouraging it, I may, perhaps, be tolerated for an hour in the statement of a few plain facts, which, strangely enough, in this connection, seem to have been overlooked or forgotten.

Sectionalism arises as well from the omission of acts as the commission of acts; in withholding from a portion of the people what they properly demand, as well as in aggression upon legal and well-defined rights. Our Government was intended by its founders to confer equal benefits, and to impose equal responsibilities; and whenever it shall fail in either of these objects, complaints will necessarily and justly arise. Then will it have lost that peculiar feature which gives to it all its winning charm and beauty, and there will be nothing left of it to be especially desired.

Sectionalism, as I understand it, is inequality and injustice, and can have no open defender. It ends where monarchy and absolutism begin, and therefore can never be tolerated or countenanced in a land of liberty. A tendency toward it is the surest sign of degeneracy and decay, and, when once established, the

end of our republican experiment will be at hand. But if it lacks undisguised defence, it has its patrons in all those who are laboring for exclusive legislation, who would build up and fortify one portion of our country upon the ruins of another, and who would forget that our Government secures to us a common destiny.

There is a sectionalism in acts, if not in advocacy. The North have long suffered from it—in their commerce, their manufactures, their agriculture, their mechanic arts, their equality, and their inherent political rights and powers. We have long borne wrongs and forborne complaints; we have asked, and been denied; we have begged, and been spurned; we have struggled, and been overcome. Through our timidity, our subserviency, and our strifes, have we failed in our claims, our petitions, and our trials. We have solicited when our rights were plain; we have implored when we should have demanded; we have divided when we should have been united. For this we should not blame the South, but the North; and not so much the people of the North as the politicians of the North. We have been cursed by a breed of men who represented themselves, and not their constituencies; and at last, as was right, their selfishness was unrewarded, their ambition uncrowned, and their treachery rebuked. They have granted boons without returns; have compromised and lost all. If we have not been utterly sacrificed, it has not been because our leaders have not deserted us. If we have grown and prospered, it has been because of God's favor, and not of man's help.

Sir, if ninety Representatives in this Hall can control one hundred and forty-seven; if thirty Senators yonder can govern thirty-six; if fifteen feeble States can rule over eighteen

powerful ones; if minorities can overcome majorities, and weakness strength, let us not further degrade ourselves by whining complaints against the former; but let us, in as manly a way as we may be able to do so, acknowledge their superiority over us, and have it written down in the archives of the nation, that our children may understand it, and learn their plain duty from it. If any one supposes I entertain a feeling of animosity towards my Southern brethren, let me here and now disabuse him. I commend them; I admire them for their boldness and success. But whilst I do so, I have an unspeakable contempt for that pusillanimity which enables them to exercise the one and to accomplish the other. I would have them imitated in their State pride and lack of gold-greediness; in their zeal, their energy, their frankness, and their skill. If we were more like them, we would suffer less, and they would respect us more. They would not then secure all the powers of Government, and all the patronage of office. Our Northern Presidents would be full-grown men; commanders-in-chief of the army and navy; executing the laws, suppressing incipient treason, and maintaining the spirit of our institutions. Our cringing Buchanans would be moulded into inflexible Jacksons, and the times of honesty and confidence, of quiet and good feeling, would be restored.

Instead of this order and harmony, which should characterize a common brotherhood, we have become discordant, and oftentimes almost belligerent. For the last ten years, at least, has this been the unhappy condition of our country. Sectionalism has been nursed and animated, until it has become the fruitful and commanding parent of all our national afflictions; not a sectionalism from the North, but from the South; not springing from the few who have been unable to learn the compromises of the Constitution and the value of our fathers' compact, but from the many who, feeling their weakness, have united for strength; a sectionalism not generated in the bracing air which cools the brow of the virtuous and intelligent laborer, but of the fetid and feverish atmosphere of rice swamps and cotton fields; not cultivated in green pastures, beside still waters, but upon plains burnt and blasted, as by hurricanes of fire; a sectionalism not of the farm and workshop, but of the lounge, the hammock, and the veranda. It is not plebeian, but a gentlemanly thing, that awes Presidents, fascinates lawgivers, and directs the ship of state. Now it is gentle and persuasive, then fierce and persistent, and at all times untiring and triumphant. It possesses no inherent force; our connivance alone arms it. It is the emblem upon the shield of Alcibiades: as the child it would be mild and harmless, but we give it the thunderbolt, and make it fearful and destructive.

The cause of our distraction and dissension

is the agitation of questions connecting themselves with slavery; and I would impress this truth upon the public mind, that it is the determination to extend rather than reduce that institution which has arrayed the sections in apparent, if not actual, hostility. Each succeeding day but makes it the more evident that slavery expansion is the omnipresent and ruling consideration, alike in theology, in politics, and government. If I am mistaken, why do churches wrangle, and then secede? What has threatened periodically the stability of the Union? How will you account for the widespread alarm of 1850, and the misnamed compromises of that year? Why do our chief officers become intemperate partisans instead of temperate rulers? Whence arises the necessity for subverting party principles, changing party policy, and destroying party platforms? In what direction shall we look for that powerful agency which distinguishes between equals; in the one case conferring sovereignty, and in the other withholding it? Whose cupidity is ever reaching out frantically to seize the native African, and to clutch bordering domains; giving material aid and defence to the filibuster and land pirate; provoking proclamations of war from abroad, and inciting to bootless instructions for order at home? And to what cause shall we attribute the perpetual failure of all measures conducive to agricultural and mechanical growth and development?

Mr. Chairman, in the last half of the eighteenth century, when the republican patriots of France and America affirmed the freedom and equality of all men by birth and nature, our colonies accepted the declaration as an axiom, and rested upon it as the rock of their hope. Around it they kindled and fed the fires of the Revolution; and shivering and in rags upon the ice of winter, and fainting and wasted upon the sands of summer, they defended it with their lives, their fortunes, and their honor. They saved it, and consecrated it. On it rests all our institutions. It is the great shrine which our fathers covered with their blessings, as the Cherubim covered with their wings the ark of the covenant of the Lord. Now it is assaulted so frequently, it neither excites interest nor occasions remark. A new gospel has been preached to the nation, and the man who values either his character or repose will be careful not to molest the modern orthodoxy by vain attempts to resuscitate the past. Those traitor zealots, who were so misguided as to give their labors to God and posterity, died too soon to learn the lie they had advocated, and how little they had achieved. It is well it was so, for they barely escaped the day when, if living, they would have been followed and taunted by derisive and detraction epithets; and when a Federal chief, sitting giddy-headed in the chair of Washington and Jefferson, would have opened upon them the vials of his indecent wrath, and demanded them in sacrifice, to appease

the vengeance of those who must always despise him. Largely connected with the institution, they did not permit the consideration of slavery to interfere with the discharge of that plain duty they believed they owed the cause of mankind. Thinking it right to rebuke wrong, they did so in plain and unambiguous language. They were not theorists merely, but practicalists. They looked forward to an unconfined liberty, and declared absolute, perpetual bondage inimical to the education, opinions, social life, and every moral quality of those who were surrounded by it. We are not permitted to follow either their example or their precepts. Silence, even, will not leave us unmolested. We are now required, under the impending pains and penalties of party anathemas and proscription, to declare the enslavement of a weaker race to be patriarchal and heaven-ordained; and that those who fought our battles, and framed and shaped our Government, were banded infuriates and silly philanthropists. In this land, there are as yet no chains forged for the intellect, which may not be broken; and we will never allow either our faith or our confidence to be skakkled. It was this exaction made of believing Christians, to array themselves against the sentiment of the world, and to proclaim slavery a sacred institution, which has divided the churches, and laid the foundation for that remarkable propagandism which professes to rely upon the Divine favor for its ultimate ascendancy and success. The conquest of the Southern church to the sanction and interests of slavery has given it a city of refuge which it always before lacked, and has made it bold in the enormity of its demands. We are required to fall down and worship it. This is a sectional view that we never can sanction; and we appeal to the justice of God and the moral sense of men to sustain us in our refusal.

The effort to justify the origin of slavery, however it may be regarded by those taught in a different theology, cannot be more objectionable than the means used to coerce them into its adoption. Some of these it is my purpose to refer to; and I regret that I do not command the time to speak of them with that particularity which is demanded by their importance.

The people of the Northern States entertain a loyal attachment to the Constitution and the Union. Those who would deny the declaration have fallen into the mistake of assuming the singularities of a few to be a type of the mass. We will maintain the Federal compact in its integrity. There is no law, written, organic, or statute, against which we will raise the hand of rebellion; and we are fast forming the determination to restrain others from doing so. There is no record of a time when we fell short of a discharge of our whole duty. We have not only fought our own battles, but the battles of a common brotherhood. We have

striven long because we loved well, and we gathered victory because we were devoted. We have branded treason, rebuked fanaticism, and kept the faith. And now, having thus acted, strategy makes use of our patriotism to overcome us. Those in the South for whose rights and welfare we have struggled and exhausted ourselves through long and arduous campaigns, feeling our passion for the Union to be our weakness, break in upon our needed rest, and startle our fears with its threatened dissolution. This cry always comes from the same quarter, and is sectional. It has been wonderful, magical in its office. It has secured tribute, subsidies, and esteem. Where our judgments would deny, our hearts have granted; and, stung by our wrongs, we have even caressed their cause. This cry that has so often startled the nation in the past, "*the Union is in danger*," has by no means been a groundless one. It has been in danger. It has been placed in surroundings of danger by the political speculator, for the mere purpose of having it saved. It will be again in danger; how frequently it may be so, it is not for me to predict; but this I will venture to declare, that danger will periodically assail it, until the lessons of justice shall be better learned on the one hand, or concessions shall be refused upon the other. Whenever that danger has existed, security, transient from its very nature, has been easily purchased, and always at the same price—by weakening the strength of one portion of the Union, and by strengthening the weakness of another portion of the Union. The consumptive system of slavery can no longer feed upon itself and live. It is to be nourished by milk drawn from the healthy breast of vigorous liberty. The sinking energies of the one are to be invigorated and sustained at the expense of the stalwart natural energies of the other. In this way, is an equilibrium to be maintained in the Republic. The laws of God and nature are to be counteracted, and principles of vastly unequal forces, and always at war with each other, are to be made coequal by human enactments. Shall God or man rule? Shall the temporal law repeal the eternal law? If the Union is to be preserved, it will be by bulwarks, and not by flight. Secession, now so flippantly promised, is a violation of more than sworn obligation; it is worse than treason; it is the destruction of the happiness of a numberless posterity; it earns the felon's death; and we trust its punishment first to him whom we shall call to preside over our destinies; and if he fails us, then to self-preservation and the unconquerable energies of truth, as it presides in the hearts of educated freemen.

The years from 1844 to 1850, inclusive, will long be remembered, from the most remarkable, as it was the most bold and adroit sectional movement known to our history. It had for its object a gigantic slavery extension, but under

a pretext very different in its form. It was nothing less than the forcible acquisition of one-half if not the whole of Mexico, for the purpose indicated, under color of the annexation of Texas. It is worse than folly to suppose that the determination to sustain what the South call the balance of power, but which would be more appropriately named the supremacy of power, has only just been determined upon. It has long been a settled policy with Southern leaders, recognising in it, as they do, the condition of the life of slavery. And how is the correctness of their view to be resisted? That man who has read the history of his race, and has not closed his eyes against the plain teaching of events transpiring daily around him, will never be convinced that there can be an enduring peace between slavery and freedom. Truces may be agreed upon, but they will be like the compacts of kings, made to be broken, whenever interest, ambition, passion, or progress, shall will it. Air lines may define rival States, but they never can bound conflicting sentiment. The vigorous and the true will invade the sickly and the false. The light of the press, the mechanical agencies and other productions of highly-cultivated art, the green fields and profuse harvests of scientific agriculture, the wide-spread wings of prosperous commerce, and the flooding wealth of ceaseless thrift, are not to be restricted by river banks, or corner stones, or parallels of latitude. These influences are forever and ever at work. They are your zealots, your fanatics, your traitors, your abolitionists, eternally preaching of the noblest triumphs of civilization, and impressing their lessons upon the hearts of the most inconsiderate and wayward. They are the invincible antagonists of ignorance, indolence, sterility, and poverty, and none but the unwise or disingenuous should attempt to deny it. When you can wall them in, you can control the travels of reason and the mightiest impulses of humanity. Then you may "bind the influences of Pleiades, and loose the bands of Orion." Then you may "bring forth Mazzaroth in his season," and "guide Arcturus with his sons."

It is not the handful of men planting sedition, and warring openly against legal institutions and fundamental law, which the States South fear, and against whose acts they seek protection through expansion. It is the reflection from the whole surface of the States North—their intelligence, skill, production, enterprise, and prosperity, which threaten and disturb. To foster and encourage these is to augment the danger. Not to attempt to counteract them would indicate an abandonment of the struggle—the breaking down of the Trojan bridge. I see here the cause of all the agitation upon the slavery question, in Congress and out of Congress, for the last fifteen years. Herein lies the secret of the contests for the Territories, the violation of covenants and compromises, and the appalling aggressions

upon the sovereign rights of the people. The South seek the acquisition and tenure of the Territories; and what better agency, let me inquire, can they employ, to fortify themselves? Once surrounding us by a belt of States which should regard our institutions as inimical to theirs, we might well anticipate the fate of the Man in the Iron Shroud. With the powers of the General Government thus placed beyond our control, the walls would constantly contract upon us, until, at last, we should be crushed by the pressure; or, if left to survive, it would be upon some rugged mountain top, dwarfed to the insignificance of San Marino. Here I point to the cause and source of that sectional antagonism which must continue until either the North or the South shall gain the ascendancy. Time will cast our country's horoscope; but let us still trust that it will remain her good fortune to exercise a humanizing and Christianizing sway over an injured and distorted humanity. There is such a thing as "manifest destiny;" and the destiny of the South is perfectly manifest to every one except themselves.

Sir, a few foot-prints in the past point out unmistakably the direction in which events have been hurrying us. The least noticed of these, at the time, was the daring resolve of party leaders to set aside the expressed and known will of the Democratic voters in the selection of a Chief Magistrate. As Mr. Van Buren was cast off in this way, and without damage to those engaged in the plot, it has never since been considered unsafe for a delegated body to engage in usurpation, or to give to their edicts the force of obligation. This is a great mischief, but by no means the most grievous result of the act; for upon it may be charged one of the greatest outrages, as I conceive, our people have ever been called upon to endure. I allude to the enactment of the compromise measures of 1850, and the fruits they have produced. By the great body of the then dominant party of the country, Mr. Van Buren had been virtually placed in nomination for the Presidency; but because he failed to see that necessity for the immediate annexation of Texas which was felt by others, delegates from Pennsylvania, even, who had given written pledges to sustain him, were among the earliest to sacrifice their plighted faith and the wishes of those they presumed to represent. The contrivance was successful, and the issue born. But, I am glad to know, the monster proceeded from no Northern womb; we did but act as midwives at the birth. The annexation achieved, as was foreseen by its parents, the war with Mexico, and an acquisition of her soil foreordained, as was supposed, for slavery, followed as closely-linked resulting consequences. But as God sometimes ventures to overrule the plottings of men, even the wisest of men, an unseen hand was at work to disappoint purposes, bringing good out of evil. As



Arlotta's bath in the brook, by attracting the attention of Duke Robert of Normandy, led to the establishment of the British empire, so a shovel-full of earth, carelessly thrown up near Suter's old fort, wrested California from blight and mildew, and converted it into Arcadian pastures and vine-wreathed vales. The discovery then made was the real philosopher's stone, which gave a golden throne to Freedom, and planted her victorious banners on the shores of the broad Pacific. So far, well; but now the folly and submission began. Those who had secretly played with stocked cards for the prize, and lost it, still made claim and showed their hands; and the winners, always magnanimous—rich in present gains—agreed to pay bounty for their daring and their enterprise. Yes, California, with area enough to make three States larger than New York, with a population more than sufficient to entitle her to two Representatives in this Hall, and with a Constitution desired by her people, was denied admission into the Union because of her choice of institutions, although purely republican in their form. Preferring the energy and productiveness of white labor to the sloth and sterility of black, we were required, I may say constrained, to buy her in as a sister, and at a price fixed by the usurer. As I am on the subject of sectionalism, it may be expected I should be particular as to the consideration yielded.

In the first place, we gave the fugitive slave law, and bound three million of adult freemen, engaged in professions, trades, and agriculture, to leave their books and tools and plows, to seek after and retake the running property of those who refused the captors the equality guarantied by the Constitution and the justice demanded by the spirit of the Government.

In the second place, having, by the resolutions of annexation, conceded to Texas, with a title to less than one hundred and seventy thousand square miles of territory, the astounding right to multiply her power—to divide and subdivide herself into at least five slave States, to be represented by at least ten Senators—we, in the flooding of grateful hearts, but with eyes blinded as by cataracts, made her a free gift of additional domain, sufficient in extent to constitute two States as large as Ohio, and bound the public Treasury to pay her ten million of dollars and interest, that she might the sooner avail herself of the monstrous prerogatives conferred upon her.

In the third place, although the father of "the compromise measures" declared that slavery did not exist, by law, in any of the territory acquired from Mexico, the demand was made, and agreed to, that it might be extended over Utah and New Mexico, comprising near half a million square miles of surface. In a word, these were the humiliating concessions made to the South as far back as 1850, not in

return for acts of grace or good will, but seemingly as a propitiation for the enormity of having petitioned for a plain right. Such is the statesmanship of barratry and the statesmanship of bungle, over which praises have been sung to cover up disgrace.

The South have a settled policy; the North have none. The South have the policy of sectional interest and advantage; the North lack even that of consistent and persistent opposition. When they would make oblations to their peculiar institution, they clothe themselves in the mantle of a pretended patriotism, and declaim on the sacredness of the Constitution; but when we venture to ask a sustaining hand for ours, they would disfigure us by attempts to gird us with sackcloth, and filling our ears with the yelp and taunt of sectionalism. And I should like some one to name to me a President who, within the last decade at least, has not contemptuously turned his back upon those to whom he promised fairness, whose votes were necessary to his promotion, and who really constitute the right arm of the nation. Let him be named, if possible, for I confess I have never known him, even by repute. They have all—yes, all—been living commentaries upon the insecurity of platform professions and the spirit of submission, if not forgiveness, in the betrayed elector. The present Executive has not so much rendered himself notorious by his mere partiality, as he has by the disgusting subserviency displayed in his rule. His cajolery and deception as a candidate have only been excelled by his cynical demeanor to his true friends as an officer. He has valued phrases of flattery above the honest support of disinterested friendship, and prefers retirement, amid the execration of his neighbors, to the eulogies which wait upon faithful service. A self-relying and self-sustaining manhood would induce him to look above and beyond the artificial or painted horizon by which the trickster seeks to limit his vision, and not allow himself to be made a partisan and dupe. But when we find our confidence betrayed, and decency insulted, let us not blink the cause. Those communities which, harmonized by a common concern, take advantage of our want of unity and purpose, impress the placeman and spoilsman with the notion that they hold the keys of honor and of fortune. There is something here to study and to learn.

The South have necessities, and act upon them. The North have necessities, and sink into dreamy slumber. We fail to observe the steady steppings of the invader, but get into a frightful bustle when his guns begin to thunder at our city walls. The South are vociferous for party, as long as its machinery works unerringly to their advantage. The North are satisfied with declarations of a governmental policy, without regard to its success; and exult over platforms, whilst all their embodied principles are being violated. I cannot sanc-

tion the course pursued, either by the South or by the North. It is unfair; it is unjust. That of the South is sectional and aggressive; that of the North, yielding and self-destructive. Deprecating anarchy and war, I desire, above all things, an honest maintenance of the compact between these United States, in its integrity. Sustaining Democracy, I protest against its being made a catch and a cheat. Born and living in one of the most powerful, prosperous, intelligent, and generous of the free States, I will not admit a right of superiority over our citizens, either by nature, education, or grace.

In 1856, there was nothing better understood than the doctrines and pledges of the National Democracy. They were plainly written, and received but one interpretation. Popular sovereignty *over all domestic institutions* was declared to be as perfect and complete in the resident of a Territory as in the citizen of a State; and that party bound itself to its faithful maintenance. If it was sound and undeniable before the election, it was not the less so afterwards. But no; it failed in practice. It failed to accomplish what it was believed by many it would accomplish, and therefore it was repudiated. It failed to give Kansas to slavery. It failed to make eight million of men, without industrial habits and colonizing capacity, superior to eighteen million with these auxiliaries, in their race for new sovereignties; and thenceforward it was enrolled in the catalogue of humbugs. It failed to aid the sectional purposes of the South, and thenceforward to favor it became heterodox; and all who have done so, from that day to this, have been branded with treason, and trodden down beneath the iron heel of a fear-struck, renegade President. The end ought to have been seen from the beginning. On the 19th of March, 1856, when this doctrine was at the flood-tide of its popularity, I ventured to use this language here:

"Sir, the supporters of that bill [the Kansas-Nebraska bill] have proclaimed to the nation 'that the Territories of the United States are 'to constitute 'a fair field,' and that there is to 'be a 'free fight' there, between the North and 'the South, to decide whether slavery or freedom shall rule them. If the energy, the enterprise, the active modes of life, the available capital, and the numbers, of the North, shall 'not be able to compete successfully with their 'opposites in the South, and secure freedom 'to the Territories, then I will admit that there 'is a vitality and a power in slavery which we 'of the North have never dreamed of. In my 'opinion, the Representatives of the South 'in the Thirty-third Congress 'have sown the 'fire, and they will gather fire into their own 'garners.'"

I have only to add, that the correctness of my views has been proven at an earlier day than I then anticipated, and that the pang of repentance now comes too late. The choice to be made by the South—and I admit it is for

them a severe one—is between the rigid observance of existing law, which will shut out slavery from the Territories by a popular vote, and Congressional intervention directly to exclude it. The next census, if fairly taken, will show such a preponderance of population on the side of the North as to convince the most skeptical on this point.

But there are more appalling evidences of the sectionalism I charge. These are found in acts of glaring lawlessness and disorder, and in the determination to cripple and impoverish Northern labor.

Sir, there are eighteen States of this Union, and soon there will be twenty-three, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and across fifty-eight degrees of longitude, teeming with millions of men, controlling and directing the literature, commerce, agriculture, manufactures, and mechanic arts, of the whole country; fruitful in peace, and able for war, who will not soon forget the early history of Kansas, and the suffering of their friends and kinsmen there, through violence and fraud. It was there the lesson was industriously taught and fully learned, that the rightful rule of the people over all their institutions meant but the sanction and acceptance of slavery; and that a President of the United States could be as false as other men. It was there the people ascertained, for the first time, that the power to form and regulate institutions, conferred upon them by their organic act, and which Mr. Buchanan informed them had an especial reference to slavery, would confer sovereignty, or deny it, just as its exercise might be congenial or uncongenial to slavery; that the people of a Territory were under a constitutional obligation to legislate for its benefit, but could under no circumstances legislate against it; that a Territory was virtually a slave State; that popular sovereignty, which before an election was admitted to be alike in State and Territory, was a naked right and obligation to assist the South against the North in a contest between them, which was to end in the superiority of the one and the inferiority of the other; and that when a majority, deceived by artifice, would not consummate the dishonesty, it should be perfected by ruffian invasion, stuffed ballot-boxes, and the bayonets of the Federal army. These States will not be likely to overlook all this. When they shall do so, their future will be made up, and might as well be written out.

Unfortunately, it is not permitted us longer to doubt the existence of Southern sectional schemes, and of the inefficiency alike of laws, treaties, and proprieties, to restrain them. In the infancy and innocence of the Republic, the inhumanity, criminality, and impolicy of the slave trade were admitted, and denounced under severe penalties; now, however, intelligence, character, influence, and wealth, are directed in its favor. Although the Constitution looked to its suppression after the year

1808, the statutes made in pursuance thereof are treated as unconstitutional, without any adjudication against them, and rewards offered to the depraved and venal, to treat them as nullities. How this conduct may appear to others, I cannot say; but to my mind it looks to the destruction of Government, and comes with an exceedingly ill grace from a quarter appealing to a few in the North, equally extreme in their notions, to love and abide by the law. Federal courts fail to punish the offenders; and he who all his life has breathed the air of freedom, and sworn to execute the laws, gives to them the strongest manifestations of his approbation and esteem. This movement, carrying with it, as it does, the plainest admission that the South require additional labor to cultivate their lands; indeed, that their necessities in this respect are so overruling as to constrain them forcibly to subvert the very foundations of all safe government, does not restrain them from the significant absurdity of demanding for their slaves not merely the territory already belonging to the nation, but even Cuba, Central America, and Mexico. If the South have any reason for aiding, encouraging, and shielding, the filibuster, which they are willing to declare, it is found, unquestionably, in this pretence. This is, then, their position, and to the maintenance of which, as I infer, they mean, sooner or later, to commit the Democratic party, and to have recognised by Congressional action. It may be thus plainly stated: slaves are now so high in price, and lands so low, as to show a great demand for the former; and therefore the foreign slave trade must be renewed, and the laws abolishing it repealed. Then, again, slave territory must be added, to afford an outlet for surplus labor; and, to acquire it, treaties must be broken down, the national honor tarnished, and the country, if needs be, embroiled in servile, civil, and foreign wars. Here, I presume, we are to look for that true conservative nationalism which, under the patronizing guidance of Presidents, Cabinets, and small officials, brands Northern devotion to the Union, the Constitution, the laws, and the sound principles of republican government, as sectional and unfriendly. Such demands must be resisted to the last. They can mean but one thing; and, unchecked, they can end in but one thing—unlimited slavery expansion, and the subjection of the North.

Southern statesmen and politicians, resting upon the conclusion, to force slavery into the mastery over freedom, the North is not only to be shackled, but weakened by starvation. Directing all their efforts to erect a line of slave battlements around the free States, we could scarcely expect them to strengthen our means of resistance, and consequently we must not be surprised to find all kindly and genial legislation denied us. Those who see nothing significant in the failure here, or in the Senate, of all measures conducive to the interests of Northern

capital and labor, are invariably the least reflective of our people, and those who are most safely relied upon to make up party Conventions, and so to shape their faces as to receive a master's smile. The North ask but a fair share of the benefits of Government, and they will soon have it, in the only way by which it should be reached: by doing equal and exact justice, and by forcing others to follow their example. It is possible, I know, that, mortified by defeat, those who drive us to this resolve may desire to follow the example of Sardanapalus, to fire the temple and perish in the flames; but we will save both it and them.

Sir, this discussion has been to me by no means a pleasant one; but the general charge of fanaticism so constantly thundered against the North, because of mere individual delinquencies, has become so nauseating, that I have felt myself forced into it. I have stated my facts and drawn my conclusions. They are true and legitimate, and I throw them before the country, desiring but an impartial judgment upon them. I criminate the accusers, and prove them guilty of the charge they themselves prefer. The South are the accusers, and sectionalism their accusation; and how can they explain away the circumstances I have arrayed against them—requiring the church to justify slavery; driving the North into an acquiescence in their demands, that the Union may be shielded; closing the doors against free States, until the capricious price fixed for their admission is paid; proselyting Presidents to Southern schemes; using the enunciations of party for local and selfish purposes, by allowing or denying sovereignty to the people, as their interests may incline; disregarding the most sacred compacts and statutes, in reopening the slave trade and encouraging land piracy to build up slave States; and withholding all legislation favoring the growth and prosperity of the North? Certain it is, if the North ever entered the lists for sectional profit, they have been far outstripped in the race.

Mr. Chairman, you value highly your title to American citizenship, because it is honorable. It has been made so by the natural operations of the political system under which we live. Our Constitution was framed in liberality and justice; and until recently we have all revered it. Its humane principles, rather than soil and climate, have made us a great nation. It recognises no birthright prerogatives, and disposes, as far as possible, of all artificial distinctions between men. It records no single selfish thought; on the contrary, its philanthropy is as broad as the earth. It has made our country a father to the fatherless, a refuge for the pursued and persecuted—the citadel of freedom. It has doubled our population, peopled new States, increased productive enterprise, vindicated its origin, and established the sacred character of its mission. As far as human forecast can discover, the only obstacle



in the broad road of empire which Providence seems to have marked out for us, is the conflict of sectional institutions and interests. If this cannot be prevented, it certainly need not be encouraged. I have no right, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the domestic establishments of my friend in South Carolina, and I deny his right to interfere with mine. We are both shielded by the same law. If mine have merits to recommend them above his, and powers and influence beyond his, that is his ill fortune or his ill choice, and he must not quarrel with me on that account, much less contend that his shall be accepted. Early Christianity disturbed the business of Demetrius, lessening the demand for silver shrines; but he was not justified on that account for insisting upon the worship of Diana. Each must be left to the people, for their unrestricted acceptance or rejection, as advantage, convenience, or fancy, may dictate. They will eventually dispose of all such difficulties, whether we will it or not.

It is popular power, sir, that has made us what we are; it will lead us on to a dazzling future. In the mean time, men will have nightmares, and awake to blissful realities; prophecies of disaster will be made and falsified; faith will fail and be restored; embarrassments will be interposed and brushed

away. Even now, no ocean strand limits the force of our example. We have a written history without a parallel in the annals of our race. We have touched the disguises of tyranny as with the spear of Ithuriel. After six thousand years of unavailing effort, it was reserved for us to truthfully map and define the political attributes of man. In three-quarters of a century we have advanced from a few feeble colonies to numerous and mighty States. From the wilderness we have carved out the fruitful field, cultivated the products of all soils and climates, and fed starving millions. We have built more cities than Thebes had gates; invented steamboats and telegraphs; made railroads; opened mines; and, by the aid of the mechanical genius of our people, are on the eve of supplying the world with the fruits of our arts. We now stand in the front rank of earthly Powers—not as a nation of warriors, born to the work of death, but as a nation of men educated to the trades of life; not degenerated and loaded with chains, but in perfect stature and unfettered will. Shall all this be sacrificed to the weakness of the foolish, the aspirations of the selfish, or the machinations of the wicked? The public heart responds quickly to mine, "Never! no, never!" and there is safety.